

VZCZCXRO2790
RR RUEHIK
DE RUEHAA #0239 0560722
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 250722Z FEB 10
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4286
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 6289
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3961
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3820
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 4533
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1502
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 4430
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000239

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, EEB
COMMERCE FOR DSTARKS/EHOUSE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [EIND](#) [ETRD](#) [SOCI](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TX](#)
SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: DOMESTIC TEXTILES NOT
COMPETITIVE WITH IMPORTS

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for Public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) In mid-February, Embassy economic assistant surveyed Ashgabat stores that specialize in textile products to find out what types of products they offered, where the textiles were produced, and the price range. The government-owned store "Altyn Asyr" (Golden Century) offered a limited range of 100 percent cotton products, including jeans, pajamas, sportswear, towels, terrycloth bathrobes, and sheets. All of the items for sale were produced domestically. Towels and sheets were the best selling items, both among local customers and visitors from Russia and Kazakhstan, because of their good quality and low prices. A medium-sized towel was available for \$3 and a set of sheets sold for \$25. Prices for tee shirts and sportswear ranged from \$3-10 for children's sizes and from \$10-30 for adult. The material used for the tee shirts and sportswear was not as soft as some imported products, nor were the colors as bright. The government-owned store offered a limited variety of poor quality jeans at prices from \$10-15.

¶3. (SBU) Privately-owned stores offered a wider variety of children's and adult clothing made in Turkey, Thailand, China, and Uzbekistan. The products made in Turkey and Thailand were better quality than the Turkmen equivalents, but were more expensive, ranging in price from \$10-70. Prices for Chinese textiles were the same as for locally-made products, but the quality was better and the variety greater. Individuals, not companies, probably brought in the products from Uzbekistan, because the range was limited to tee shirts and sportswear, but the quality was better than similar Turkmen products.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT: Turkmenistan could make its textile products more competitive in both local and foreign markets by improving the quality. One way to do that

would be to grow and use more long-staple cotton, which is finer than the short-staple cotton that Turkmenistan currently grows, but also has lower yields. In addition, the Turkmen textile companies could blend synthetic fibers with cotton in order to improve the durability and quality of the clothing, and to make it more competitive with the products being imported from Turkey and Thailand. END COMMENT.

CURRAN